# OMAR KHAYYÁM THE POET

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The Wisdom of the East Series
EDITED BY
L. CRANMER-BYNG
DR. S. A. KAPADIA

# OMAR KHAYYAM THE POET

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WISDOM OF THE EAST

# OMAR KHAYYÁM THE POET

BY

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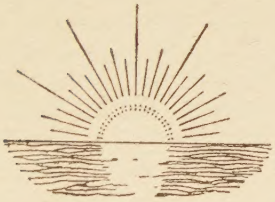

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# PREFACE

In the following pages an attempt is made to reach a "sound opinion" (as the Arabs would say) as to what and what manner of man the poet Omar Khayyám was. As it was, and is, common custom for the copyists of books, especially books of poetry, to add, as they go along, verses of their own or another's making, the earliest manuscript of the quatrains of Omar Khayyám with an assured date has been taken as being, for lack of a copy from his own hand, the nearest we can meantime get to the author himself. From it the sketch of Omar here given has been drawn.

The renderings of the quatrains have been made from E. Heron-Allen's magnificent edition of *The Rubá'iyát of Omar Khayyám*, and I have to acknowledge my indebtedness to his translation also, as well as to those of E. H. Whinfield, J. B. Nicolas, and others.

In the case of some eight or nine stanzas which passed my understanding, I took counsel with Lieut.-Colonel John Stephenson, formerly Principal of Government College, Lahore. As it is, some two or three stanzas, of which the meaning is, as it seems, quite obscure, have been left untranslated.

I must also thank Sir E. Denison Ross for an expression of his opinion in regard to the date of the new manuscript published last year by Dr. Friedrich Rosen.

The anonymous versifier of the quatrains given on pp. 18 f. likewise went over the whole translation, vastly bettering the wording and making the lines more easily to be understood at a glance.

Lastly, I have to thank the Editors for their courtesy and patience, and the printers for the great care which they have taken with the text.

T. H. W.

Glasgow College.

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# EDITORIAL NOTE

THE object of the Editors of this series is a very definite one. They desire above all things that, in their humble way, these books shall be the ambassadors of good-will and understanding between East and West—the old world of Thought and the new of Action. In this endeavour, and in their own sphere, they are but followers of the highest example in the land. They are confident that a deeper knowledge of the great ideals and lofty philosophy of Oriental thought may help to a revival of that true spirit of Charity which neither despises nor fears the nations of another creed and colour.

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# OMAR KHAYYÁM
# THE POET

It was in the year 1859 that Edward FitzGerald launched without name his tiny craft, laden with what purported to be renderings of verses by a Persian writer, up to that time, in Europe at least, almost quite unknown. This little booklet in paper covers, and running to no more than thirty-four pages in all, offered to the English reader seventy-five four-lined stanzas of the poet, under the title *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, the Astronomer-poet of Persia*. Although the price of the book was lowered by degrees until it reached the modest sum of one penny, it entirely failed to find readers. Rossetti says that Swinburne and some of his friends acquired their copies at this bed-rock figure. Von Hammer had already drawn attention to Omar Khayyám in the year 1818, but German was then largely an unknown tongue: FitzGerald himself read it no more than he could help. Once again Garçon de Tassy, the French orientalist, in the *Journal Asiatique* for 1857, drew Omar forth from his seclusion and gave some few of his verses and an

account of the poet himself. This article was written from material supplied to him by FitzGerald and his *munshi* E. B. Cowell, professor of History in Cambridge, who discovered the oldest MS. of the poet in the Bodleian Library in 1856 and published an account of its author in the *Calcutta Review* in 1858. FitzGerald had asked de Tassy not to acknowledge in his article his indebtedness to Cowell and himself, a behest which he observed to the letter. We may therefore consider Cowell and FitzGerald as the true ushers and sponsors of Omar Khayyám.

Omar's next appearance before a European audience was in the year 1867. Encouraged by the high esteem in which this poet's verses were held at the Persian Court, the interpreter to the French Embassy there, J. B. Nicolas, printed with a literal translation a text lithographed in Teheran. Spurred on, as it appears, by this French version, FitzGerald then in the following year issued a second enlarged edition of his rendering, containing 101 stanzas. This new venture was, Mr. John Payne says, "utterly neglected," although Swinburne's impression was that, as a result of his own and his friends' purchases referred to above, the first edition was already selling at a guinea a copy "in a week or two" after. But now, at any rate, the tide began to turn. FitzGerald began to be "discovered." A third edition was called for in 1872,

and four years later was commanding a steady sale at 7*s.* 6*d.* a copy. Copies of the first edition, which the author had regarded as waste paper, were eagerly competed for and fetched any sum up to £60 and over; and even the second, of which Mr. Payne picked up a copy for a few pence, did not lag far behind the first. In America they were richly bound in sumptuous covers and embellished as though they had been copies of the Bible or the Korán. The Omar Khayyám Club was founded, and Omar in his English dress had become the divinity of a cult which would have astonished none more than FitzGerald[1]—or Omar himself.

Meanwhile other translators entered the field. Nicolas has been already mentioned. His version runs to 464 stanzas. It has been lately done into English. One of the most reliable, though free, is the German version of F. Bodenstedt, in several editions. In English the best known are those of E. H. Whinfield (508 stanzas with the Persian text), J. Payne (845 stanzas without text), and E. Heron-Allen. The last has a facsimile of the oldest manuscript with a printed transcription and a literal translation of the same. It has 158 stanzas. And there are several pocket editions, such as those of Johnson

[1] A letter written a month before his death begins: "I do not suppose it likely that any of my works should be reprinted after my death."—*Letters*, Preface.

Pasha and O. A. Shrubsole. Finally, a new English version by Dr. F. Rosen, from a hitherto unused manuscript, is promised.[1]

Turning now to the MSS. of Omar Khayyám in his native Persian, none of them are early. The oldest (that discovered by Cowell and published by Heron-Allen) is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It contains, as has been said, 158 stanzas or strophes, and was written in Shiraz in the year A.D. 1460, or nearly 350 years after the death of the author. One of the MSS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris has 349 stanzas and is dated 1527, or just 400 years after Omar; and another in the British Museum with 540 stanzas is dated 1624, or almost exactly 500 years after the death of the poet; and so on. It will be seen that the later the MS. the larger the number of the stanzas; and this is true also of the lithographed editions, in which the number rises to wellnigh a thousand. That all these stanzas or "quatrains" were not written by Omar Khayyám is certain. And this makes it necessary for us to revise the statement sometimes made that Omar the poet had no honour in his own country and among his own kin. For, if imitation be the sincerest form of flattery, no one could have had much more of it than

[1] The Persian text (which has appeared) is dated 721 and contains 329 stanzas. If this means the Hijrah date, the MS. would be 140 years older than the Bodleian; but the date is evidently wrong.

Omar, and it seemed to grow as the centuries went by.

In addition to the MSS. of quatrains which are, as a whole, ascribed to Omar, there are a number (less than a hundred) of fugitive or detached stanzas, which are assigned, now to Omar and now to some other author. The whole of these are to be found in the lithographed text followed by Nicolas, but only fourteen of them in the oldest (the Bodleian) MS. These fourteen are all, it must be confessed, such as anyone might be tempted to plagiarise. That Omar could have been the pirate is unlikely, from the fact that the quatrain or *rubá'í* stanza, as such, was introduced by the poet Abu Sa'íd ibn abi'l-Khayr, who died only some seventy-four years before Omar. The only exception might be in the case of those which are ascribed now to Omar and now to the man into whose shoes, in his capacity of philosopher and mathematician, Omar stepped—the mighty Avicenna. There was, however, a very compelling reason why later poets should have ascribed their heretical verses to the earlier, for what might be ventured under the lenient sway of the Seljuks and their great minister Nizám al-Mulk would often, under later dynasties, be as much as the poet's head was worth. By that time Omar was lying securely in his peaceful grave at Nishapor.

But not only have the stanzas which are found

only in the later MSS. and lithographed editions the inherent defect of lateness. They seem to differ also both in style and content from the earlier, although it is a well-known fact that the Persian language is as unchangeable as the laws of the ancient Medes and Persians were said to be. The literary Persian of to-day is identical with that of eight hundred years ago. But, to mention only one non-literary point, there is hardly a line in the Bodleian (the oldest) MS. which betrays the religious provenance of the author. He might be a Muslim, a Jew, a Zoroastrian, or a Christian. With the stanzas found only in the later copies it is not so. Many of them could only have been written by, or would be intelligible only to, a Muslim.[1]

We are therefore justified in saying that for us Omar Khayyám the poet means the Bodleian MS., and it alone. All the stanzas translated by Nicolas, Bodenstedt, Whinfield, Payne, and others from later MSS. or from lithographed editions will have to be jettisoned; for it is quite useless to say that some are "certainly genuine" and others "doubtful" or "spurious." We have no means of knowing what Omar might

[1] Such, for instance, as those in which the author expresses his regret that he is not so good a Muslim as he ought to be, or that he has or has not sufficiently observed the Fast of Ramadán, or which refer to the chapters of the Korán by their names, as if well-known, allusions to expressions occurring in it, and so on.

have written or might not have written, any more than we have in the case of Shakespeare, but rather less. The Oxford MS. is the nearest we can get to the author. Over the 350 years which separate them there is no bridge. With this we must be content.

As the Oxford MS., however, was almost certainly the one from which FitzGerald made his translation,[1] it might be supposed that in order to know Omar, all we have to do is to read FitzGerald. Unfortunately, although FitzGerald's quatrains might well have been written by Omar, the fact remains that they were written, not by Omar, but by FitzGerald. For not in one-half of his stanzas is it possible to say of which stanzas of Omar they are a translation. FitzGerald himself would have been the first to admit this. Speaking of another work, he says: "Anything like a literal translation would be, I think, unreadable." "It is an amusement to me to take what liberties I like with these Persians,

[1] He *may* have made use of the copy of the Calcutta MS. sent to him by Professor Cowell. The dates are as follows: FitzGerald receives a copy of the Bodleian MS. from Cowell, August 1856; receives copy of the Calcutta MS. June 1857; gives the manuscript of his translation to Parker January (?) 1858 (*Letters*, I, 266). It seems, therefore, unlikely that the Calcutta MS. was used for the first edition at any rate. Whether it were called on to furnish material for any edition could only be proved by pointing out a stanza of FitzGerald which was based on one which was found in the Calcutta MS., *and it alone*. This would be a difficult task, since FitzGerald drew water from many wells for his work.

who (as I think) are not poets enough to frighten one from such excursions, and who really do want a little Art to shape them" (*Letters*, pp. 249 ff.). And of his rendering of the quatrains he writes to Professor Cowell: "My translation will interest you from its *Form*, and also in many respects in its *Detail*: very unliteral as it is. Many Quatrains are mashed together; and something lost, I doubt, of Omar's Simplicity, which is so much a Virtue in him" (pp. 266 f.); and again: "I doubt I have given but a very one-sided version of Omar; but what I do only comes up as a Bubble to the Surface, and breaks" (p. 282). Indeed, it would hardly be unfair to set FitzGerald among those compatriots of Omar who did not dare, or did not care, to own the authorship of their own verses, and so fathered them upon their great predecessor, whilst others even deemed that they were improving upon their model.[1] It has been pointed out that of FitzGerald's stanza (No. 81):

Oh Thou, who man of baser earth didst make,
And e'en with Paradise devise the snake,
For all the sin wherewith the face of man
Is blacken'd, man's forgiveness give, and take!

[1] FitzGerald himself, in a letter to Cowell dated November 1858, says: "As to Omar, I hear and see nothing of it in Fraser yet; and so I suppose they don't want it. I told Parker he might find it rather dangerous among his Divines; he took it, however, and keeps it."

not a word is to be found in Omar, and even he would not have dared or wished to pen the last line.[1] In order to get an accurate rendering of the Bodleian MS. one must have recourse to Heron-Allen's translation, the notes to which give cross-references to the corresponding stanzas of FitzGerald, Nicolas, Whinfield, and others.

The Bodleian MS. contains, as has been said, 158 strophes. Each strophe consists of four lines, of which lines 1, 2, and 4 rhyme with each other. As, in Arabian poetry, all the lines of a poem end in the same rhyme, and as the first half-line rhymes with the second half, it follows that the first two lines of every poem form a quatrain, that is, *half*-lines 1, 2, and 4 rhyme. But there is more required of a quatrain than this, and to speak of the quatrains of an Arabic poet such as Abu'l-Ala, who has many epigrams in the form of couplets, is misleading. In the Persian quatrains, such as those of Hafiz and Omar Khayyám, there is a fixed metre. What this metre was greatly puzzled the early editors. FitzGerald writes (May 1857) that the learned Garçon de Tassy confesses that he could not make out the metre of the quatrains at all—never could—although " I am enough skilful in scanning the Persian verses as you have seen in my *Prosody of the Languages of the Musulman Countries* " ;

[1] Mrs. Cadell in *Fraser's Magazine*, New Series, vol. xix, p. 658.

and more than one translator deems the quatrains to be of varying metre, although every line of Omar's quatrains is in one and the same metre. But in addition to the metre there is also the rhyme. This may consist of a single letter as in English, or it may extend to half the verse. In the latter case, it generally means that a particular phrase or refrain is repeated after the rhyming consonant proper. The following stanzas from Omar have been made for the writer so as to show both the metre and the rhyme of the original:

Since none may the morrow's surety gain, Moon of my Night,
Come, charm from this heart its load of pain, Moon of my Night!
Here under the Moon's pale eye the cup deep let us quaff,
Ere long shall she seek us here in vain, Moon of my Night. (5)

Now since that her joy the Spring to all lavishly lends,
Each quickening heart to desert-ward longingly tends.
Snow-white as the Moses-hand o'er boughs blossoms lie spread,
Soft stirring each soul the Jesus-breath sighing descends. (13)

Life's wonderful caravan from sight hasteth away.
Look then how this moment's full delight hasteth away.
Boy! care not a doit for ills that bend over us all.
Bring hither a cup of wine, for night hasteth away. (60)

Realms never so fair for wine I'd fain barter away.
Yea! Would'st thou do well? For wine all gain barter away.
Yond land of Ferídún and the crown Cyrus doth wear,
Sweet tile of the jar! for thee I'd e'en barter away. (139)

Come bearing the bowl and cup in hand, joy of my heart!
Pace we by the river's flow'ry strand, joy of my heart!
Fate's envious wheel to cup and bowl time and again
Earth's rarest and best e'er now has turned, joy of my heart! (147)

The quatrains are arranged in alphabetical order according to the *final* consonant of lines 1, 2, and 4, from Alif to Ya, the first and last letters of the Persian alphabet. There are, however, three exceptions. The series opens with two

strophes of which the rhyming letter is Z. The first of these is an apologia for the author's having written the quatrains at all:

Had I not threaded the pearl of obedience to
Thee at any time,
Not swept the dust of sin from my face at any time,
Yet were I not hopeless of thy generosity,
Inasmuch as never have I called the One "two"
at any time.

That is to say, whatever offence the verses which follow may give to the reader, no one can say that the author is a Zoroastrian, or anything but a strict monotheist, although his theism may not amount to very much. But, although this stanza is an evident apology for what follows, that is not to say that the apologist was not the author himself; just as Herrick apologises in his "Prayer for Absolution,"

"For those my unbaptisèd Rhimes,
Writ in my wild unhallowed Times,"

or as Tennyson opens "In Memoriam" with a prayer for forgiveness "for these wild and wandering cries."

The second stanza is also an apology, or rather an attempt at justification, if not a defiance:

With Thee in the winehouse that I talk in secret
Better is than that in the prayer-niche I say,
without Thee, a prayer.
O Thou First and Last of all creation!
If Thou wilt, burn: if Thou wilt, caress!

This stanza also may well have been penned by Omar himself.

How the closing stanza came to be where it is, it would be hard to say. Its rhyming letter is D. It depicts the delight with which the close of the month of Fasting is hailed.

The remaining 155 quatrains of the Bodleian MS. are arranged, as has been said, in alphabetical order. There is no other connection between them except that, as in some of the Hebrew Psalms, an expression which occurs nowhere else may be found in two consecutive stanzas (for example, 14 and 15, 83 and 84, 94 and 95). As in the 119th Psalm also, which resembles the quatrains so far in form, the author speaks at one time as if he were young, at another as if he were old. He probably wrote down the quatrains at various times, as they came into his head. And this explains why he appears in all sorts of moods and phases: optimist, pessimist, fatalist, agnostic, ascetic, pietist, humorist. In this he often reminds us of the author of Ecclesiastes, or of the different speakers in the Book of Job. One might say he even borrows their very words.

And it would be as useless to attempt to nail him down to any one school of thought as it would them. At one time he is an Epicurean, at another a Stoic. Some of his verses would lead us to think him a member of the Malámatíyah, a kind of Dervish who defied public opinion and so have been compared to the Cynics. They were to be found scattered over the Muslim world, but they are mentioned for the most part long after Omar's day. They took their name from a sentence in the Koran (5, 59), which states that God will, if the Muslims fail Him, raise up a people "who shall not fear the blame of a blamer." These people were therefore named Malámatíyah or "people of blame" on the principle of *lucus a non lucendo*, because they did not care what people thought or said of them, and did not know respect of persons, even that of the Sultan. They bore a striking resemblance in their manner of acting and expressing their ideas to the Hebrew prophets, and in Turkey in more recent times they became a political force. More than one stanza of Omar Khayyám has the appearance of being penned with the deliberate purpose of outraging the feelings or offending the dignity of his readers, and this was a prime motive with the Malámatíyah.

But whilst Omar cannot be pinned down to any one way of thinking, it cannot be denied that he leans to one side more than to the other.

He is more inclined to despair than to hope; to worldliness than to piety; to scepticism than to faith. But he has no cut-and-dried philosophy of life to offer. The *enigma vitæ* remains unsolved and the Sphinx's riddle unread. Moreover, as every quatrain makes a complete poem by itself, and usually contains more than one idea, it is difficult to illustrate one side of Omar's mind from his own verses without bringing in other sides at the same time, or cutting up the stanzas into single lines—always a dangerous proceeding. His faith and works must, therefore, generally be taken together.

As to the source of Omar's inspiration, it has been suggested that he owes much to the blind poet Abu'l-Ala, who wrote many verses in Arabic some sixty years before him.[1] Abu'l-Ala's poetry is, however, of decidedly heavier metal than Omar's. He was a philosopher and linguist, and his verses are packed with learning of all sorts, and can hardly be read without a commentary. He was an imitator in his earlier life of Mutanabbi, who is in the East accounted the greatest of Arabic poets, but of whose many verses it has been reckoned that there are not more than some half-dozen which make any appeal to European taste. They belonged to the class of what Johnson called the "metaphysical" poets. Abu'l-Ala had daring enough, and he

[1] *The Diwan of Abu'l-Ala*, by Henry Baerlein, "Wisdom of the East Series," 1908.

may have given Omar courage to utter things such as he would not otherwise have dared to write; but through blindness and ill-success he had none of the light-heartedness and *joie de vivre* which Omar displays. He falls rather into line with the poet Al-Tughrá'i, whose mournful psalm of life so aptly voices the political feeling of the Muslim lands to-day in their hour of eclipse. "All we can say is," says Professor Nicholson,[1] of Abu'l-Ala and Omar, "that their philosophies of life have some features in common, and that several passages in the *Luzúm* at once call to mind well-known 'Omarian' stanzas."

Perhaps the thought which takes up most room in the quatrains of Omar Khayyám, and which forms the dark background of his otherwise light-hearted verse, was that of the shortness and apparent uselessness of human life, and the failure of all philosophical and religious systems to put any sound meaning into it. The thought is one which has weighed on the human heart since the world began.

From my coming there has been to the World no profit,
And at my going its beauty and glory will not increase,
And from no man have my ears ever heard,
As for this coming and going, to what end it is. (51)

[1] *Studies in Islamic Poetry*, pp. 205 f.

Had my coming been through me, I had not come.
Were my going through me too, where should I go ?
Better than that it were that in this world of dust
I had not come nor gone nor been. (157)

Since the issue for man in this salt-march
Is naught save choking with grief or rooting up of life,
Happy the heart of him that from this world swiftly goes :
At peace is he who into this world never came. (124)

A curious fancy which takes hold of Omar's mind is the idea of a sort of transmigration of the body, or, to use an Irishism, a metempsychosis of matter—a thought which is found before his day as well as since. The red of the rose has at one time coloured the blood of a king. The cup from which he drinks is made from clay which was once a human body. This conceit is not uncommon in modern poetry, but with Omar it is the prime article of his creed. When Herrick speaks of the tints of the flowers being caused by Cupid spilling the nectar of the gods, he uses a poetic fancy, and does not mean his words to be taken literally. With Omar it is otherwise.

Where'er the bed of tulip and of rose has been,
From the red of the blood of a prince it has been.
Every violet cup which grows from out the ground
Is a mole that on the cheek of beauty has been.
(43)

This whirling sphere to destroy thee and me,
Takes aim against the unseen soul of thee and me.
Sit on the grass, O Idol! for ere long
Grass will spring from the dust of thee and me.
(129)

Into the workshop of the potter went I last night:
I saw two thousand pots, talking and mute,
All at once one pot sent forth a scream,—
That *he* was the pot-maker, pot-buyer, pot-seller.
(103)

This water-jug, like me, a groaning lover has been.
In search of the face of a fair it has been.
This handle which upon the neck of it you see
Is a hand which upon the neck of a friend has been.
(9)

A potter yesterday I saw in the bazaar,
On the moist clay much thumping dealing;

And with mute tongue that clay to him was
a-saying:
"I have been as thou: with me gently be thou
dealing." (89)

Last night upon the stones I cast the glazèd
bowl.
Head-merry was I to do these boorish deeds.
To me with mute tongue was that bowl
a-saying:
"I was as thou: as I thou too shalt be." (146)

Men speak of heaven and hell, and of future bliss and misery. Omar's ever-ready retort is that these are two undiscovered countries, which no one living has ever been to and returned. There is no moral government of the life of man in this world. On the contrary, nature seems to take a savage delight in destroying the works of her own hands. The problem of hedonism is a problem still.

Reason that wanders in the path to bliss
An hundred times each day to thee doth
say:
"Reckon thou well this moment of thy time,
for thou art not
That herbage which they mow, and it doth grow
again." (49)

In the way of love, to be effaced it ever behoves.
By the talon of Fate to perish it ever behoves,
O Cupbearer, fair to meet, sit not *thou* idle!
Bring us water, for dust to become it ever behoves. (52)

In cell and school, fire-temple and synagogue
Fearers of Hell there are and seekers after Heaven.
But that man who hath knowledge of the secrets of God
Within his heart of this seed soweth none. (24)

How long shall I lay bricks upon the ocean's face?
No desire have I for the idol of the church-worshippers.
Of Khayyám who says, "A denizen of Hell shall he be"?
Who into Hell has gone, and who has come from Heaven? (18)

The composition of the cup which he has mingled into wine
Gives not to the drunkard a right to the breaking thereof.
These so many fair hands and feet, coming from His hand,
For love of whom hath He shapen: for hate of whom did He break? (19)

One naturally asks, "What can anyone who holds such dismal and gloomy views of the world make of life? What is he to do? Omar's answer to this problem is short and unmistakable. It is contained in two words which occur in stanza after stanza. These two words say, "Drink wine." This is the only positive counsel Omar has to give.

As no man can go surety for a to-morrow,
To-day do thou make happy this heart distraught.
Drink wine by the light of the moon, O Moon, for the moon
Full oft enough shall seek us and shall not find. (5)

Into a sleep I fell. To me quoth one full wise:
"From sleep to none did bloom the rose of bliss.
Why do a thing which is the mate of Death?
Drink wine, for many a lifetime 't will be thine to sleep." (27)

Since Life is ever passing, what is Baghdad, and what Balkh?
So the cup be filling, what is bitter and what sweet?
Drink wine, for after you and I are gone, this moon full oft
From the last to the first of the month shall come, from the first to the last. (47)

They say: "The Paradise of Eden with Houris
is pleasant."
I say: "The water of the grape is pleasant."
Seize thou this cash, and from that credit hold
thine hand,
For the noise of the drum, O Brother, from afar
is pleasant. (34)

Drink wine, for from thee many an ailment will
it carry away.
Anxious thought of the two and seventy sects
will it carry away.
Eschew thou not Alchemy, for of it
One draught shalt thou drink.—A thousand ills
will it carry away. (77)

Lip upon lip of the cup I laid from stress of
desire,
That from it I might seek the means of living
long.
Lip upon lip of mine it laid and as a secret said,
"Drink wine, for to this world thou comest not
again." (100)

Drink wine, for 'neath the clay thou long enough
shalt sleep,
Without familiar, workfellow, equal or mate.
Have a care! To none say thou this hidden
secret:
"No tulip frost-dead will again unfold." (35)

Give wine, for to my wounded heart it is a balm.
An equal is it to love-melancholy men.
Unto my heart the dust of one draught is better
Than this Vault, which is naught but the world's skull. (37)

This matter of the place which wine holds in Omar's philosophy is one in regard to which one might obtain a quite erroneous impression from reading such a translation as that of Mr. Whinfield. Whinfield's rule is "to give what seem the best specimens of each class of quatrains, and to exclude the rest. In accordance with this rule, I exclude, in particular, a large number of quatrains in praise of wine, and exhortations to live for the day, which recur in the MSS. with most wearisome frequency." This is much as if one were to issue an edition of Burns omitting the love-songs, on the ground that there are too many of them, which, no doubt, there are; but an edition of his poems without them would not be Burns, and the quatrains without the wine and *carpe diem* stanzas are not Omar.

It is sometimes supposed that when Omar speaks of wine, he is using the word in a mystical sense, as is the habit of the Sufis or Muslim mystics. But this is one of those cases in which the wish is father to the thought. J. B. Nicolas, coached by his Persian *munshi*, would interpret every stanza in a mystical sense, but he scarcely

seems to be a believer in his own method. In his note on stanza 166 of his Teheran text he asks: "But what is to be said of the two last hemistichs of this quatrain? Ought one to take them in a mystic sense? The answer of the more part of the Persians whom I have consulted on this point is affirmative. But the Mollahs, that is to say, the irreconcilable adversaries of Khayyám and of his adherents, are of a contrary opinion." Again on quatrain 233 of his text he says: "Khayyám is essentially symbolical and mystic. Here, this temple of the idols denotes the tavern, where the poet, surrounded by young and beautiful persons, whom he compares to idols, is exalted by his inebriation to the infinite contemplation of the Divinity, and finds himself disengaged from his own existence." Omar, no doubt, makes use of many of the mannerisms of the Sufis, but this is partly because the Sufis employ the vocabulary of everyday life in a mystical sense, as may be the case in the Biblical Song of Songs and certain Psalms. So both Omar and his compatriot the great Jalál ed-Din Rumi use the same words: the cup of wine, the ruin, sleep, blood of the liver, the snare, the mouth, the tip of the curl, the world of dust, me and thee, and so forth; and many times the later seems to be quoting the earlier, whilst, on the other hand, there are naturally many expressions in Rumi which are

not found in Omar; mirror, ecstasy, society, solitude, *zikr*, dance, asceticism, Ka'bah, inquirer, assurance, and many more. The truth is that one cannot read half a dozen lines of Omar without seeing clearly that there is no mysticism here, any more than in Burns. On the other hand, the inner meaning of one of the mystical poets, such as Omar's younger contemporary Saná'i,[1] lies on the surface from the first line. Not that Omar is to be put down as a mere Sydney Carton, to whom wine was the one satisfying thing in life. His nearest equivalent in English is the Herrick of the *Hesperides*, but without anything like his coarseness. A work composed just one hundred years after Omar's death speaks indeed of him as the most talented of the philosophers, atheists, and materialists. The oldest mention of him, however—that by his friend and disciple Samarkandi—is very far from regarding him as outside the pale, and refers only to the "convivial gatherings" of his friends. It has been asserted that Omar was led astray in the matter of wine-drinking by the teaching and practice of Abu'l-Ala, but Dr. Nicholson shows that Abu'l-Ala was thoroughly orthodox on this point, whatever he may have been on others.[2] As to the difficulty of Muslims

[1] The first book of his Diwan has been edited and translated by J. Stephenson in *Bibliotheca Indica*, Calcutta, 1911.

[2] *Studies in Islamic Poetry*, p. 205. Also Professor Margoliouth's *Letters of Abu'l-Ala*, p. 74.

drinking wine at all, the late Professor E. G. Browne, in his delightful *Year amongst the Persians* (1893, p. 375), says :

"Wine-drinking plays a great part in the daily life of the guebre, but, though I suppose not one total abstainer could be found amongst them, I never once saw a Zoroastrian the worse for drink. With the Musulmans the contrary holds good ; when they drink it is too often with the deliberate intention of getting drunk. . . . To a Zoroastrian it is lawful to drink wine and spirits, but not to exceed : to a Mohammadan the use and abuse of alcohol are equally unlawful. The Zoroastrian drinks because he likes the taste of wine and the glow of good fellowship which it engenders : the Mohammadan, on the contrary, commonly detests the taste of wine and spirits, and will, after each draught, make a grimace expressive of disgust, rinse out his mouth, and eat a lump of sugar ; what he enjoys is not *drinking*, but *being drunk*. . . ."

If we are to judge Omar by most of his verses, he was of the Zoroastrians rather than of the Muslims in this matter. One of the commonest pleasures of a Persian's life is that of picnicking. Many of Omar's quatrains describe a picnic by the side of a stream or by the meeting-place of the desert and the sown, sometimes with a book of verse or a youthful companion, who acts as cup-bearer, but always with a jar of wine.

On the face of the rose is a veil from the cloud still:
In my being and heart an inclining to wine still.
Go not to sleep. What room for sleep is there yet?
My Life! Give wine, for there is sunlight still.
(96)

Drink wine, for thy body in the dust atoms shall become.
And after that thy dust a cup and pitcher shall become.
Of Hell and of Heaven eke careless do thou be.
The wise—why by such tales misled does he become? (79)

Rise, and the salve for this afflicted heart do thou bring.
That wine musk-scented, rose-hued do thou bring.
Ingredients of an antidote [1] for sorrow would'st thou have?
Ruby wine and the silk of the lute do thou bring!
(88)

Of that wine which alone is life everlasting do thou drink.
Sum capital of the pleasure of youth it is: do thou drink.

[1] One of the ingredients is ruby (Richardson).

Burning like fire it is ; but upon grief
Acting like water of life it is. Do thou drink.
(90)

One cup of wine an hundred hearts and faiths is worth.
One draught the kingdom of China is worth.
Save ruby wine there is not on the earth's face
Bitterness, which a thousand sweet lives is worth.
(85)

When in all eternity, the past and that to come,
Is there a substitute for the merry hour of wine ?
Passed from my ken are both theory and practice :
To every hard question a solution is found in wine. (107)

Than a new kingdom one draught of old wine is better.
Get thee from the way of all that is not wine. That were better.
Of it one cup is better than the kingdom of Ferídún, an hundred times.
The tile that is the wine-jar's lid than the diadem of Kay-Khusraw is better. (139)

Yond ruby in a ewer of crystal do thou bring.
That comrade and mate of all good fellows do thou bring.
Since thou knowest that the space of this world of dust
Is a breeze that quickly passes by, wine do thou bring. (87)

Season of rose, bank of a stream, marge of the sown,
One, two or three folk, and a butt for jest, fair of form,—
Bring forth the bowl, for they who drain the morning draught of wine
Are free from the mosque and clear of the synagogue. (32)

One flagon of wine, the lip of a friend, the edge of the sown,—
All these have left to me no cash, to thee no credit.
Mankind to Heaven and to Hell are in pawn:—
Who hath been into Hell, and who from Heaven hath come forth? (45)

It may well be that in these stanzas, and such as these, Omar is drawing a life-portrait of himself. But in other quatrains he presents us with a different picture. In one quatrain he declares

that when the crack of doom shall sound, he will be found lying unconscious on the tavern floor (132). In another he commends the life of a Robin Hood, who plays the highwayman and gives of his plunder to the poor (123). In another he boasts of stealing prayer-mats from the mosque :

Into the mosque, though with petition I be coming,
Yet, by Allah, not for the sake of prayer am I coming.
One day here a prayer-mat did I filch away.
That is now outworn, and again and again am I coming. (115)

In the following he appears to take the Muslim view of wine as contrasted with that of the Zoroastrians :

I the outside of being and not-being do know :
I the inside of all things up and down do know.
For all this, of my knowledge let it be my shame,
If a rank beyond inebriation I do know. (120)

Of stanzas in the more strictly *carpe diem* strain, which counsel living for to-day and letting yesterday and to-morrow take care of themselves, the following may be given :

To-day, which is the hour of my youth,
Wine I would have, for that it is my joy.
Upbraid me not. Though it be bitter, it is good.
It is bitter but because the life of *me* it is. (11)

On the face of the rose the breeze of Spring is gay.
Aneath the orchard trees the enchanter's face is gay.
Of Yesterday, which is past, naught thou sayest is gay.
Be gay. Of Yesterday speak not, for To-day is gay. (17)

Drink wine, for this alone is "everlasting life."
Thine (only) profit from thine hour of Youth is this:—
The season of the rose and wine and friends full-drunk:
Be merry for the moment, for such (a moment) is Life. (36)

Coming from this revolving Arch dire deeds do thou see!
And from the passing away of friends a world empty do thou see.
Whilst thou canst, do thou for one breath be for thyself.
To-morrow consider not: Yesterday seek not: the Present do thou see. (126)

How long must I grieve o'er that which I have,
or have not ?
And whether I pass this life merry of heart or
no ?
Take up the cup of wine, for to me is un-
known
If this breath which I draw in, I shall return or
no. (136)

There are, to be sure, some stanzas which, if they alone were extant, would compel us to set Omar down as merely one of the many mystic poets of Persia :

To him for whom the shoot of Certainty has not
grown up,—
It is because he is not on the right Path.
Ho ! every one who has laid an hand upon
the tender bough !
To-day as yesterday know, and to-morrow as the
first.[1] (14)

Him would'st thou have ? From wife and child
begone !
Manfully away from kith and kin begone !
All that is a shackle upon the Path for
thee—
With a shackle how shalt thou tread the Path ?
Shackle, begone ! (86)

[1] That is, Creation is an eternal process.

In these strophes there is no hint of a literal interpretation, and if such alone were found among the quatrains, we should undoubtedly be compelled to reckon Omar also among the Sufis. Moreover, Omar certainly (as has been said above) uses many of the stock phrases of these people. He speaks in defence of "drunkards" (3, 123, 127), mentions the four elements (7) and the lock of the fair (16, 73, 118, 131), and refers to the length of his own moustaches (132).[1] But, if Omar did give way for a moment to that frame of mind, it was for no more than a moment; and there are no lines which are not capable of a literal interpretation. All he seems to have done was to draw on the vocabulary of those with whom he did not agree, to express his own ideas. The Sufis may have spoken of spiritual ecstasy under the figure of wine or love. But when Omar uses similar terms apparently in a similar way, the third or fourth line too often shatters the impression created by the first and second. Before the end of the stanza is reached he shows only too plainly that he is speaking in no metaphorical sense (24, 113, etc.). Many of his verses read like a parody upon those of the Sufis.

[1] Quite recently a visitor to Kerbala aroused the wrath of the students, who took him for a Sufi, on account of his long moustaches.—T. Lyell, *The Ins and Outs of Mesopotamia*, London, 1923.

This is not to say that Omar was merely an Oriental Falstaff, ready for any adventure and full of braggadocio and sack. Poets, both East and West, write verses for their own sake, merely for the pleasure of making them, and to construct their lives out of their verses would be like using his famous Limericks for a life of Edward Lear. At the same time no strict Muslim would have dared to pen verses such as Omar wrote, and we are justified in drawing from them the conclusion that their author belonged to no religious faith or philosophic school. Omar, as he appears in the oldest MS., was not interested in any sort of metaphysical or theological speculation. His chief delight lay in natural scenery, in what Lucretius calls *species verna diei* and the opening rose, and in the companionship of his fellow-men, always accompanied, however, by what Mr. Dick Swiveller was wont to speak of as "the ruby," as, indeed, does Omar himself.

The "spring" verses remind us of the "Song of Songs," but it has to be remembered that in warm countries spring often means autumn, when the land, baked and burnt by the summer's drought and heat, with the first fall of rain becomes alive and green once more.

Now that the world has the means of attaining joy,
In every living heart is a longing for the wilderness.

On every bough is the appearing of the Moses-hand : [1]
In every soul is the sighing of the Jesus-breath.[2]
(13)

See the skirt of the rose cleft by the breeze of spring !
The Bulbul at the beauty of the rose is full of joy.
Sit in the shade of the rose, for many a rose by the wind
Into the dust is swept, and dust becomes. (135)

The day is pleasant and the air nor cold nor hot.
The cloud is washing the dust from the cheek of the rose.
The nightingale to the saffron rose in the Pehlevi tongue
Makes complaint : " It ever behoves to drink (wine)." (67)

Each morn that the face of the tulip receives the dew of night,
The heads of the violets in the orchard downward bend.
Truly to me from the rosebud sweetness ever comes,
Which holds together its own skirts. (82)

[1] The white blossom like the leprous hand of Moses.
[2] The revivifying breath which raised the dead.

This is the time when they make fair the world
with spring breezes
And open the eyes (*chashm*) with hope (*chashm*)
of a cloud.
The Moses-hand shows like foam [1] on the bough :
The Jesus-breath from the dust comes forth. (80)

In stanza 98 Omar wakes up to find the world all white with snow :

Make full the bowl, for snow-coloured comes the
day.
From that wine which is ruby—from it (alone
mayest thou) learn colour.
Two logs take up, and enkindle the gathering :
Fashion of one a lute, and that other do thou
burn.[2] (98)

One side of Omar Khayyám's poetry which we miss almost altogether in FitzGerald's version is its humour. Sometimes this takes humour's lowest form—that of the pun :

They who lay the foundation of their business
upon detraction
Come and place a parting between soul and body.

[1] "Foam" is *kaf*, which also means "palm of hand," the same *double entendre* in *Saná'i*, p. 91, l. 1.

[2] The point is that the one word '*úd* means both "log" and "lute." The one is to be used to warm the assembly physically, the other spiritually.

Upon my parting I will place flagons of wine after this,
If they place a saw upon my neck, as though I were a cock. (57)

In this stanza there are no less than three puns. The word *fark* is used first for the separating of soul and body, then for the parting of the hair. The word for "flagons" is *khurús* and for a "cock" *kharús*. And the word *arrah* means both a "saw" and a "cock's comb."

Instances of humour in the ordinary sense are :

O Khayyám, this mourning for sin, what means it ?
And in grieving what good, great or small, is there ?
For that man who sins not there is no forgiveness.
Forgiveness comes through sin. Whence then this grief ? (23)

I drink wine and my opponents from left and right
Say : "Drink not wine, for it is the first foe to the Faith."
Now that I know that wine is foe to the Faith,
By Allah, I will drink the blood of the foe, for that is lawful ! (38)

Notwithstanding that wine has torn my veil,
So long as I have life, I will not be cut off from wine.
Marvelling am I at the sellers of wine, for they,—
Better than that which they sell, what *will* they buy? (62)

Take heed that thou nourish me from the cup of wine,
And this face of amber do thou of ruby make.
When once I have passed within (the veil), wash me with wine,
And from the wood of the vine the boards of my bier do thou make. (69)

Since I have fallen under the foot of Destiny with downcast head,
And have been dug up by the root from hope of life,
Take heed that from my clay you make naught save a wine-jar:
Haply, when it is filled with wine, I shall revive. (116)

Wine I ever drink, and each one who like me is worthy.
My wine-drinking in the eyes of God is a thing of light account.

My wine-drinking He Who is the Truth was foreknowing.
If wine I drink not, God's foreknowledge were ignorance. (75)

From this spirit, which "pure wine" they call,
The antidote for a broken heart they call.
Cups two or three, heavily full, bring to me quickly.
Wherefore good drink "bad water" do they call? [1] (104)

Like the water of a great river, and like a wind in the desert
Another day from my span of life has gone.
Two days there are which for me never awake care,
The day which has not come, and the day which has gone. (20)

That Omar wrote verses, partly for his own amusement and partly to give way to whatever mood he happened to be in at the time—and how changeable these moods were—is shown by the strange juxtaposition of incongruous strophes. Stanza 101 might have been written by the most pious of mystics:

[1] "Wine" is *sharáb*; "bad water," *shar áb*.

Counsel will I give thee, if thou wilt give me ear;
For God's sake, put not on the garments of falsehood!
The issue is for all time, this world but for a moment.
For the sake of a moment sell not the kingdom of eternity. (101)

But the stanza preceding this pious utterance ends with the line—

Drink wine, for to this world thou comest not again;

and the stanza which follows begins—

O Khayyám, if with wine thou drunken be, be gay!

To say that the same pen which wrote stanza 101 could not have written much of the rest of the quatrains would be like saying that the *Cottar's Saturday Night* could not have been written by Robert Burns, or that the author of the *Hesperides*, who is a pagan of the pagans with scarce a trace of Christianity, and the author of the *Noble Numbers*, evidently an orthodox clergyman of the Church of England, could not have been one and the same person.

Frequently, though not often, a verse reminds us of sayings in the Gospels, but, as the Sufis draw largely from the Gospels, these verses have also a Sufi ring.

Far beyond the Sphere my thought at first
Did seek Tablet and Pen, Heaven and Hell.
At last a teacher of sound opinion to me said:
Tablet and Pen, Heaven and Hell are within thee. (15)

The heavenly Vault is a girdle from our out-worn bodies:
Jayhún is a trace from our pellucid tears.
Hell is sparks from our profitless vexation.
Heaven is a moment from our tranquil time. (33)

So far as thou canst, turn not fretting upon any.
Upon the fire of thine own wrath make no man sit.
If everlasting rest thou covet,
Ever fret thyself, and fret none other. (4)

Not the smallest value of the quatrains of Omar Khayyám is to show how many-sided is the human mind. It is all things by turns and nothing long. It can be compared only to the fabled Ghúl. Hence we are not surprised to find Omar soaring to heights which remind us

of Wordsworth's "Ode on Intimations of Immortality," or of Avicenna's "Hymn on the Soul," if, indeed, Omar is not here inspired by his great forerunner.

O Heart, from the dust of the body wert thou free,
Then wert thou a naked spirit in the skies.
The Throne of God is thy seat; thy shame let it be
That thou dost come and in this domain of dust dost dwell. (145)

In a number of stanzas Omar seems to refer to some misfortune which had overtaken him and reduced him to poverty. Perhaps it was the death of his friend and patron Nizám al-Mulk.

Khayyám, who the tents of wisdom was a-stitching,
Into the crucible of grief did fall and in no time was burnt.
The shears of Fate the tent-ropes of his life did sever.
The broker of hope for nothing did him sell. (22)

And again, in quatrains 53 and 153 he laments that the only old friend he has left is new wine; whilst in 121 he has come to regard the lectures to which in youth he listened, as well as those which he himself delivered, as mere wind. It

may be that this unhappy ending to his career is responsible for the veins of pessimism and recklessness which run through so many of the quatrains. Otherwise he seems to have gained the respect and affection of those who knew him. His younger contemporary, Samarkandi, mentions having met him at Balkh in the year 1112 or 1113, on which occasion he predicted that his grave would be in a spot where the trees would shed their blossom on it twice in the year. This, at the time, he thought impossible, but, being in Nishapor some twenty years later, he visited Omar's tomb and found it at the foot of a wall over which pear trees and peach trees hung their branches. He adds: "Then I remembered that saying which I had heard from him in the city of Balkh, and I fell to weeping, because on the face of the earth and in all the regions of the habitable globe, I nowhere saw one like unto him." [1]

[1] *Chahár Maqálá*, translated by E. G. Browne, London, 1921, p. 71. There is another version of the story which makes Omar foretell that blossoms would fall on his grave *once* a year, but, as Professor Browne says, "there would be nothing remarkable in the grave being covered with fallen blossoms *once* a year; what was remarkable was that it should happen *twice*." In 1884 Mr. William Simpson, accompanying the Afghan Boundary Commission, visited the grave and found rose-bushes and some large and old trees growing by it. Some of the rose seeds were sent to Kew Gardens and grown there.—*Works of Edward Fitzgerald*, Quaritch, 1887, vol. I, p. xxv.

## STANZAS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN CITED IN THE PRECEDING PAGES

How long soe'er thou may'st, no jibe at
" drunkards " do thou cast.
Artifice and fraud from out thy hand do thou
let pass.
Henceforward if through thine own life thou
wouldest rest,
For one moment let not go the " squalid folk "
from out thy hand. (3)

The Korán, which as the choicest of speech they
are a-reading,
Now and then again, not constantly they are
a-reading.
In the lines of the Cup a verse remaineth,
Which everywhere and ever they are a-reading.
(6)

We and wine and bench and this ruin of a body
Are void of hope of Mercy or dread of Retribution.
Soul and Heart and Cup and Clothes, full of
wine-lees,
Are clear of Earth, Air, Fire and Water. (7)

Best is it that in life few friends thou take,
From far companionship with the people of the
day is good.

That man in whom alone there is to thee a stay,
When understanding's eye thou makest clear,
thy foe is he. (8)

Alas and alack for that heart wherein no burning is,
Wherein, afire for love of One, no melancholy is.
The day that without Wine thou to an end shalt bring,
To thee no day's more lost than is that day. (10)

To-day no power to thee over to-morrow is.
And thought of thy to-morrow naught but a folly is.
Unless thy heart be crazed, lose not this moment of (thy) life.
For of what's left of life the worth uncertain is. (12)

Arise! Give wine! What place is there for words?
This night thy firm-closed mouth's my sustenance.
Give to us wine rose-coloured like thy cheek.
For full of windings like thy locks is my remorse. (16)

Since my coming was not for me the day of creation,
And my going is a fixture sure, without will of mine,

Arise, swift-footed Cup-bearer, gird up thy waist!
Cares of the world with wine down would I wash. (21)

If in the springtime one of Houri form
By marge of lea to me a cup give filled with wine,
(Although this saying to everyone else be abhorrent)
Better than I is a dog, if now I suffer e'en the name of Heaven. (25)

Know thou that from the spirit asunder thou shalt go:
Within the veil of the mysteries of God thou shalt go.
Merry be thou! Thou knowest not whence thou art come:
Wine do thou quaff! Thou knowest not whither thou shalt go. (26)

Quoth the Heart to me: "A longing there is for secret lore:
Do thou teach it if so be thou hast the cunning."
"Alif,"[1] quoth I. The Heart said: "Say naught more.
If One be in a dwelling, one letter doth suffice." (28)

[1] Alif stands for Allah. Or Alif is the symbol of Monotheism, as Sana'i 95, 11, "place Alif in thy mind, and put Ba and Ta under thy feet," the latter spelling "idol."—Stephenson.

Within the veil of mysteries a pathway there is none.
Of this complex, the soul of Man, knowledge there is none.
Save in the heart of the dust, resting-place there is none.
Drink wine! For of such tales short there is none. (29)

A secret from all men of straw thou needs must hidden hold.
And secrets from foolish men thou needs must hidden hold.
See thou that, whatsoe'er thou dost before the sight of men,
Thy Hope from every man thou needs must hidden hold. (30)

Upon all happenings from of old the brand's been set.
Pauseless, the Pen from good or ill is ne'er at rest.
On the primeval Day it did give all that was to be.
Our sorrow and our struggling are without avail. (31)

The Wine's a molten ruby, the flagon is the mine:
The Bowl's the body, the liquor is the soul.

That crystal cup which is with wine a-laughing,
Is a tear wherein is hidden the heart's blood. (39)

All ignorant am I whether He Who fashioned me,
To me did say, "one of Heaven's folk" or "of hideous Hell."
Food, the Beloved and Wine upon the margin of the sown,—
All of these three to me are cash: Heaven is credit for thee. (40)

Good and evil which are in the frame of man,
The joy and grief which are in Destiny and Fate,
These lay not to the charge of Heaven's Vault:—
More without remedy than thou a thousand times is Heaven's Vault. (41)

Each one who has not planted herbs of passion in his heart,
Who no day from his life-time wasted has let pass,
Either in seeking the pleasing of God doth strive,
Or ease of body chooses and the cup takes up. (42)

Have thou a care,—the times are turbulent:
Sit not secure,—the sword of vicissitude is keen.
If in thy mouth the Age place almond-cake,
Have thou a care,—swallow it not: poison is mingled therewith. (44)

Oh thou whose cheek is laid in the wild rose mould!
Oh thou whose face is cast in the idols-of-China mould!
Yesterday thy amorous glance brought to bear against the King of Babylon
The Knight, Castle, Bishop, Pawn and Queen.[1] (46)

They who the pure wine are a-drawing,
And they who night and day in prayer-niche ever are,—
Not one of these is on dry land—all are upon the water.
*One* only is awake: all others are asleep. (48)

They who the slaves of Argument and Reason are become,
In anxiety over Being and Not-being, naught are become.

[1] The whole strength is brought against the King on the chessboard.

Go, oh ignorant one, choose water of the grape,
For those other ignorant ones, in their unripeness raisins are become.[1] (50)

Now that of heart's ease, save the name, there naught remaineth,
Old friend, save new wine, to me there none remaineth,
Never again do thou the joyful hand from cup withhold:
To-day within thy hand, saving a cup, there naught remaineth. (53)

Of that which from the Pen is gone, aught of another hue doth ne'er become,
And from feeding upon grief, aught save a bleeding heart doth ne'er become.
Though all thy life thou drink of the water of affliction,
One drop, from what it is, increased doth ne'er become. (54)

They that but for a broken moment[2] do adorn the Sphere
Do come and go, and then, in course of time, do come again.
On Heaven's skirt and in the lap of Earth
Creatures there are, which, while God dies not, still are being born. (56)

[1] They are like raisins made of sour grapes.
[2] The words have the *double entendre* of "stars."

The heavenly bodies which within the Portico
do dwell
To those with wisdom gifted are a source of
mystery.
Have thou a care lest thou the end of Wisdom's
thread do lose,
For even those who overrule giddy of head
become. (58)

That man am not I to whom of Death fear doth
come ;
For to me yonder half as better than this half
doth come.
The Soul is to me as a loan God-given :
Surrender make I when time of surrender doth
come. (59)

This caravan of Life as a marvel passeth by :
Heed thou the moment that with pleasure passeth
by.
Cup-bearer, for the morrow of thy fellows why
dost grieve ?
Bring forth a cup of wine, for the night passeth
by. (60)

(Old) Hunter as I am, the love of Thee did take
my head in snare.
If not, whence then my hand with cup of
wine ?

That penitence which Reason gave the fair one broke,
And that robe which endurance sewed the days have rent. (61)

So much of generosity and kindliness at the beginning—What was it ?
And that holding me to gaiety and dalliance—What was it ?
Now only for the vexing of my heart thou toilest.
In the end, what evil have I done ? Again, what was it ? (63)

Within my head for idols Houri-like a longing may there be !
Within my hand at every age the grape-juice may there be !
To me they say,—" To thee may God repentance give ! "
Himself doth give it not : I'll have it not : far let it be from me ! (64)

In the winehouse save with wine washing cannot be made ;
And a good name, once deformed, fair again cannot be made.
Be merry, for the veil of this our honesty
So rent is become that sewing thereof cannot be made. (65)

I saw for a livelihood a lonesome man
Who heavily the clay did tread and to it did despite.
To him that clay with mute tongue was a-saying,—
"Still! for like me treading enough thou shalt endure." (66)

Ere that upon my head a night-attack they[1] bring
Command until rose-coloured wine they bring.
No gold art thou, oh careless dolt, that thee
They in the dust should lay, and again forth bring. (68)

Oh Shah, thee has the Sphere to sovereignty appointed,
And, for thy sake, the horse of Empire has saddled.
When in its movement thy golden-hoofed steed
Puts foot to ground, it makes the earth of silver. (70)

Love, which is but a semblance—its lustre exists not.[2]
Like to a fire half-dead, its heat exists not.

[1] That is, grey hairs.
[2] "Un amour mondain ne saurait produire de reflet."—Nicolas.

A lover it behoves that year and month and night and day
For him do rest and peace and food and sleep exist not. (71)

Of immemorial time the hidden secrets none hath oped :
Without the Circle none his foot hath set.
As I from learner and from master do perceive,
In the hand of all of mother born is helplessness. (72)

Small make thou thy desire for worldly things, and live content :
From good and ill of Fortune cut thy bond.
Wine in thy hand and fair ones' locks take thou, for swift
All passeth, and this day remains—how long ? (73)

The vaulted sky from out the clouds a flower-garden poureth :
You'd say that blossoms into the orchard-land it poureth.
Into a lily cup wine of rose-colour do I pour,
As from the clouds of violet hue jessamine it poureth. (74)

Suffer it not that sorrow grip thee into its embrace,
Nor useless grief thy days' space seize upon.
Leave not the book, the friend's lip, and the edge o' the sown
Before the dust grip thee in its embrace. (76)

Wine, though it be forbid, yet 't is but in so far as, Who may drink ? [1]
And then the measure, What ? again, With whom drinks he ?
Each time these three conditions present are, well may'st thou say,
" Then, if a man of knowledge drinketh not, who drinks ? " (78)

Each draught which the Cup-bearer has shed upon the ground
Has quenched in a hot eye the fire of grief.
Praise be to God ! Thou wouldest think that wine
Is a water which from an hundred woes your heart sets free. (81)

Friends, when together you do keep a tryst,
Meet is't that of a Friend you much remembrance make.

[1] " Till thou hast drunk it, hold it an unlawful thing."—Sana'i 47, 5.

When wine, good to digest, you drink together,
What time the turn to me comes round, turn upside down the cup. (83)

Comrades, when trysted you together meet,
Each at the other's charm do ye rejoice.
When the Cup-bearer in hand the Magian wine doth raise,
One beyond remedy do ye in prayer remember. (84)

Observe the Tradition not: the Laws pass by;
But ne'er the morsel which thou hast do thou from others hold!
Slander speak not, nor make to ache another's heart.
Surety for yonder world am I . . . Bring wine! (91)

Wine is a red rose, and the cup rose water, perhaps.
(Or) may be (here) is a pure ruby in a crystal casket;
(Or) perchance a ruby has been dissolved in the water,
(Or) perhaps it is the moonlight veiling the Sun.[1] (92)

[1] "Moonlight, a clear white light is the glass, the Sun being red like wine." The rendering given is Colonel Stephenson's. Sana'i says the Korán is a casket for the pearl of Life (87, 8).

Every repentance which we made we broke again :
Upon ourselves the door of Name and Fame we shut again.
Blame ye me not if I do seem beside myself,
For from the wine of love elate are we again. (93)

In very truth, not as mere metaphor,
We pieces are—Heaven's player of the Game.
On Life's chess-mat we play as children do.
Anon by one and one into the box of Non-existence are we swept. (94)

Heart ! since the world's reality is metaphor,
Why suffer such despair from grief and want ?
To Fate thy body yield : suit to the Times thy deeds,
For what has issued from the Pen, for thee comes not again. (95)

Go, cast thou dust upon the head of this world's spheres.
Ever drink wine and on the fair of face attend.
What place for worship is there, and what place for prayer ?
For of all who have gone, not one has e'er returned. (97)

Again the way of drinking have we ta'en :
Tekbeer [1] we cast away, with the five prayers.

[1] Saying, "God is most great."

Each place where is a goblet, us you see
Stretching our neck towards it, pitcher-like. (99)

O Khayyám, if with wine thou drunken be, be gay!
If thou do sit with one of tulip-cheek, be gay!
Since at the matter's end thou shalt be naught,
Fancy thou art not, whiles thou art. Be gay! (102)

One by one my virtues see, and my sins by tens do Thou forgive.
Every fault that is gone, for the love of God forgive.
With air and wind the fire of hate kindle Thou not.
Us for the sake of the dust of God's Apostle forgive. (105)

Wine in the bowl—truly it is a spirit light.
Within the goblet's frame there is a spirit light.
Naught that is heavy fitting is as mate for wine
Saving a bowl of wine, for it both heavy is and light. (106)

This heavenly Canopy in which we are a-straying—
To a Chinese lanthorn its likeness do we see.

We see the Sun as the flame, the world as the lanthorn:
Ourselves the pictures which upon it we do make revolve. (108)

Not always have I mastered mine own soul.—What shall I do?
And form my deeds in pain I am. What shall I do?
I apprehend that, generous, Thou wilt pass me by.
By reason of this shame that Thou dost see that, as I did, so shall I do. (109)

I will rise and make purpose of the pure wine,
And make the colour of my cheek like the jujube fruit.
At this Reason, meddling of habit, an handful of wine
In the face I will cast, as though I put it to sleep. (110)

How long in solving things of every day bounden are we become?—
Be it for one year into the world or for one day that we be come.
Bring forth the cup of wine before that we
Within the Potter's workplace pots become. (111)

Since that our sojourn in this temple lasteth not,
Without Cup-bearer and without Beloved heavy penance 't were.
How often of "create" and "uncreate," oh reasoner?
As well create as uncreate the world when I am gone. (112)

With the world, since it is transient, save with art I deal not.
In counsel, save of gaiety and sparkling wine, I deal not.
To me they say: "God give thee repentance!"
Himself, He gives not, and, if He give, I deal not. (114)

Not always does my heart distinction make 'twixt grain and snare.
For mosque its counsel is, and eke for cup of wine.
Yet we and wine and the beloved continually
Mature in the tavern better are than raw in the hermit's cell. (117)

'T is morn: the rosy tinted wine one moment let us raise,
And down upon the stones this glass of name and fame let's cast.
Our hand from our long hopes let us draw back:

Upon long tresses and the bass-string of the lute
let us take hold. (118)

A cake of curd and two of bread before the world
we'll choose :
Of Empire and its train we will away with all
desire.
Poverty with heart and soul will we buy,
'T is riches that in poverty we see. (119)

One while to a master in youth we came :
One while in our own mastership happy we
became.
Mark the foundation of the discourse : What
hath befallen us ?
Like water came we in : like wind we became.
(121)

To him to whom with this world's mysteries
acquaintance is,
All one the joy or sorrow of the world's become.
Since to an end the good and ill o' the world
will come,
An't please thee, be all pain : be all antidote, an
thou wilt. (122)

How long so e'er thou canst, service to the
" drunkards " make :
The basis of prayer and fast a desolation do thou
make.

The right word from Omar Khayyám hear thou:
"Ever thou drink wine: rob on highroads: benevolence make!" (123)

Oh Dervish, from thy body the robe bedizened do thou tear,
Lest thou give up to the garment of semblance thy body.
Go, cast on thy back the old hair mantle of poverty.
Underneath the mantle the drum of Empire do thou beat. (125)

Drinking of wine and hovering round the fair,—
Better are these than at pretence of ascetic to be toiling.
If lover and winebibber inmates of Hell shall be,
Then the face of Heaven shall no one see. (127)

The merry heart with sorrow 't is not possible to warp:
Or our happy time with the stone of trial to rub.
Who knows concerning the Unseen, what it will be?
Wine fitting is, and one beloved, and in one's desire to rest. (128)

What profit is from out our coming and our going?
And to the warp of our life's stuff, what is the woof?
So many beauteous heads and feet the world
Consumes; dust they become. What is e'en the smoke? (130)

From all the lore of sciences fly thou: so 't were well.
And round the locks of the belov'd to dally it were well.
Ere that Time thy blood doth spill,
If thou should'st spill the blood of flagon into cup, 't were well. (131)

'T is I who have swept with my moustaches the wineshop:
To what is good and ill of both worlds said good-bye.
Should both worlds fall like a polo-ball into the street,
You shall seek me out. A-sleeping like a drunkard, I shall be. (132)

From all that is, save wine, to refrain is well,
And from the sway of the idols of the tents inebriate.
To be inebriate, squalid and vagrant is well.
One draught of wine from Moon to Fish [1] is well. (133)

[1] That is, extending from one end of the Universe to the other.

Give not thy body to grief for unkind Fate :
Remind us not to mourn for those now passed away.
Save to one jessamine-bosomed, fairy-born give not thine heart :
Lack thou not wine : give not thy life unto the wind. (137)

Thy life, though it revolving more than sixty years have been, lay it not down.
Where'er thou sett'st thy foot, unless thou drunken be, set it not down.
Ere that of thy head's bowl a flagon they make,
Flagon from shoulder and bowl from hand lay thou not down. (138)

Those who are gone before, oh Cup-bearer,
Within illusion's dust are fallen asleep, oh Cup-bearer.
Go thou, drink wine, and hear the truth from me :
All that they've said—'t is wind, oh Cup-bearer. (140)

The pot of wine you've broke for me, my Master.
On me the door of Life you've shut, my Master :
For me upon the dust poured the pure wine.
Dust (fill) my mouth ! but you wondrous are, my Master. (141)

Oh Vault, to every base one somewhat thou givest:
Hot-baths and millstones and drains thou givest.
The worthy man for his evening's loaf must needs lay down his pledge:
'Tis well for such a heaven naught thou givest. (142)

Oh Heart, to the secret of the Riddle thou comest not.
At the quibbles of the learned wise thou comest not.
Here with wine and cup a heaven do thou make:
For to yonder place, where heaven is, thou comest —or comest not. (143)

From the world's kitchen you do all smoke consume.
Till when the griefs of Being and Not-being do you consume?
A stock-in-trade whose course grows less you would not have.
Who doth consume the capital, since you the profit (alone) consume? (144)

Take up the cup and bowl, oh Heart's-delight!
Gaily round garth and river's brink a-strolling go.
Many a goodly man the ill-natured Sphere
Into a bowl an hundred times has made, and cup an hundred. (147)

Along the Path I go. In thousand nooks a snare Thou settest,
Then sayest: "I will take thee, if down a foot thou settest."
From Thy rule not for an atom is the world free.
Thy sway Thou dost impose; and upon me the name of "Disobedient" settest. (148)

One measure I do crave of ruby wine, and book of verse:
Enough to stay Life's latest breath it needs but be, and half a cake of bread.
And then that thou and I in desert place should sit:—
Than Sultan's kingdom it were happier far. (149)

On so much needless grief do thou not feed: Life happy live.
And in injustice' path, do thou with justice live.
Since of this world the end-all's nothingness,
Think then that thou art naught, and freely live. (150)

Oft as I turn my gaze on every side,
From Kawthar[1] through the garden flows a stream.
Like Paradise the desert is become: lost (may'st thou say) is Hell.
With one with face of Paradise in thy Paradise do thou sit. (151)

[1] A river of Paradise.

Be merry, for thy recompense they[1] settled yesterday.
And secure from all thy wishing is become that yesterday.
Happy live; for yesterday, without thy craving aught,
Thy doings of to-morrow they appointed yesterday. (152)

Give forth the ruby wine, hued like the tulip, pure:
Draw from the pitcher's throat the blood unmixed.
For, save the cup, to-day there liveth not for me
A solitary friend who hath an inner heart that's pure. (153)

In the ear of my heart quoth the Sphere secretly:
"The edict which is Fate from me thou mayest know:
In my own revolving were there to me an hand,
Then had wine set me free from head-revolving." (154)

A loaf of wheaten kernel if the hand but give,
A gourd of wine, a thigh of sheep or goat,

[1] That is, the Fates.

And then a-sitting in the wilderness myself and thou,—
That were a life whereto no Sultan might set bound. (155)

Should measures twain of wine into thy hand hereafter come,
In every meeting and in each assembly drink thou wine ;
For yonder One Who made the world concerns Him not
With a moustache like thine or with a beard like mine.[1] (156)

Stanzas 55, 113, 134, and 158 have been omitted, as being of uncertain meaning. Perhaps 134 means :

This vault is like a bowl fallen upside down,
In which all the wise are captive fallen.
In their friendship goblet and cup clave together (literally, bit),
Lip to lip, and between blood [2] fallen.

[1] Such trifles are supposed matters of revelation.
[2] That is, wine.

## APPENDIX I

## AVICENNA'S POEM ON THE SOUL

As mention has been made on page 50 of Avicenna's famous Poem on the Soul, a translation of it is given below. It will be found in the *Wafáyát al-A'yán* (Necrology of Famous Men) of Ibn Khallikán (d. 1282), of which there is the translation by MacGucken de Slane. What is practically the same text is given in the admirable Beyrut anthology, the *Majáni'l-Adab*.

Avicenna, like Omar Khayyám, belonged to Northern Persia. He was born in 984 and died in 1038. He is best known as a physician, his *Canon* being the text-book of medicine for centuries. Before he was famous in medicine, however, he was a notable mathematician and astronomer like Omar.

She flew down to thee from the Place most high,
A Dove, a mistress of disdain and pride,[1]

[1] The soul lives in Heaven until it is sent to take up its abode in the body.

From every eye of onlooker enscreened,
Yet now with candid face she stands unveiled.[1]
To thee she came unwilling, and perchance
'T would like her not to leave thee, feigning grief.
From pride she held back, nor would rest, till wont
Did her to be waste Ruin's [2] neighbour tame.
Belike the Precinct [3] of her ken forgot
Had she, and realms she loath had been to leave;
Till, when to th' *H* of her alighting joined
From th' *M* of Mansion, hers in Pleasant Land,
To her there clave the *TH* of thickest frame,[4]

[1] That is, invisible, yet self-evident.
[2] That is, the world's.
[3] Heaven.
[4] De Slane explains this as follows: The spiral Arabic *H* represents the course of her flight in alighting. The *M*, a small circle, represents the *centre* of her previous existence, for the word *markaz*, rendered "Mansion," means also "centre." The word translated "thickest," properly "heavy," is *thakil*, and the initial letter de Slane takes to be a word denoting "infirmity." "To her clave the infirmity of her heavy (body)." The *Majáni'l-Adab*, on the other hand, takes the *H* to stand for *hayúli*, the Arabic for "matter" (from the Greek), and the *M* for *mabda'*, the first *Principle*, from which the soul takes her beginning, and the *TH* for *thikl*, "weight," which is a chief attribute of body. The two lines mean that the soul, when, in the body, she meditates of the abode she has left, wishes to return thither, but the weight of the body keeps her down, until she becomes content to remain below. De Slane, however, wisely adds: "I have given the sense of the verse as I understand it, but it may most likely contain some mystic allusions above my comprehension."

Herself 'mid way-marks and mean ruins found,
Mindful of how she once the Precinct knew,
She weeps with tears that flow, nor yet have ceased.
O'er heaps of relics still she makes her moan,
By the four winds' repassing swept away,[1]
Because the snare's coarse cords her hold: a cage
From her wide Empyrean pastures bars.[2]
Until when nears the journey Precinct-wards,
And for the Courtyard wide the start is due,[3]
And she must leave here all that's left behind,
All unescorted, ally of the dust,[4]
Though raised the covering, still she sleeps, then sees
What by the eyes that sleep is not perceived,[5]
And o'er a beetling hill-top, gleaming, sings ;[6]
For knowledge doth the unuplifted raise.
Why then was she from high and lofty place
Sent to the depths of lowest mountain-foot ?
If for wise purpose God made her descend,

[1] The pre-Islámic poets are ever bewailing the sight of the relics of the camp which their Beloved's tribe has just left. Here the relics mean worldly pleasures, and the four winds are the vicissitudes of Fortune.

[2] The snare is the world ; the cage the body. The Empyrean is the pristine abode of the soul.

[3] That is, when death comes. The Courtyard is the same as the Empyrean.

[4] Even the soul does not escort the body to the tomb.

[5] The eyes that sleep are the eyes of sense.

[6] The beetling hill-top is the Empyrean again.

'Tis hid from the wit of all that's counted wise.
Then her descent, if 'twere a stroke decreed,
Was made that she might hear what none had heard,
And knowing all realities of worlds,
Return e'en though her rags had not been patched.[1]
Whilst she did one become whose way Time [2] stopped,
Until she set never to rise again.
As lightning which, athwart the pasture flashed,
Flashed and then vanished, as it ne'er had been.

[1] That is, the soul returns to Heaven at once, but the body (the rags) remains in the grave till the resurrection.

[2] "Time" means worldly pleasures, which deflect the soul, so that it does not rise and return to its place of setting: it is not the same soul which leaves the world. It has been made perfect in knowledge of what could not be learned by remaining in Heaven.

## APPENDIX II

## VERSES OF IBN AL-FARID UPON THE MYSTIC WINE

Mysticism is a phase of religious thought which is common to all religions, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islám alike. The most of mankind accept their religious beliefs on authority: they believe what their fathers believed. Frequently the authority is contained in a sacred book, such as the Bible and the Korán, or some other form of revelation, or it may be founded upon reason and philosophy. The Mystic rejects all these. He believes that it is possible to attain to the knowledge of spiritual things by thought and reflection alone, by an inward illumination or absorption into the Infinite. They can, as it were, think themselves out of their bodies and physical environment and become part and parcel of the Divine. The dividing line between Divine and human breaks down, and in the last resort man identifies himself, by a kind of pantheism, with God.

Such at least is mysticism as it is found in Islám. To the Muslim mystic the Korán is not the one

and only source of religious truth. To regard it as such is to make religion a matter of mere authority, which they call *taklíd*. This word means properly to invest one with an office by putting a chain round his neck: hence, "a man's following another in that which he says or does, firmly believing him to be right therein, without regard or consideration of the proof, or evidence" (Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, translating Jurjáni, d. 1413). On the other hand, the origin of the term may be the humbler putting of a rope round the neck of a beast of burden. The aim of the Muslim mystic is to think away everything which differentiates him from the Absolute Reality, until he arrives at that state of mind in which he can feel and say, "I am the Truth."

In the Hebrew Bible the relation of man to God is sometimes expressed as that of wife to husband, in the New Testament by that of a son to his father, in Islámic mysticism by that of a mistress to her lover. The mystic's ideal is to realise the identity of these two. Hence the relationship of the soul to God is oftenest spoken of under the figure of love. The sense of this relationship is spoken of under the figure of Wine, since it is the wine at the banquet which intoxicates the boon-companions and lifts them out of themselves.

The following verses are by the leading mystic poet who wrote in Arabic, Omar ibn al-Farid,

who was born in Cairo in 1181 and died there in 1235. They form a panegyric of this mystic wine, and should be compared with those verses of Omar Khayyám in which wine is referred to. The present writer had the advantage of reading these verses many years ago with Mr. M. Barakatallah, the friend and *munshi* of the late E. J. W. Gibb, the famous Turkish scholar.

When we remembered the Beloved, then did we drink a Wine,
With which we drunken were, or e'er the Vine was made.
To it the full Moon is a cup, and it a Sun, with which goes round
A Crescent,[1] and when it is mixed, how many a Star appears!
And, but for its perfume, I had not been guided to its Tavern,
And, but for its brightness, Fancy could not picture it;
And the World had not left of it save the last spark (of life),
As though its revealing, in the breasts of Wisdom, were concealment.[2]
Then, let it be but mentioned in the Tribe,[3] the Folk begin

[1] The cup-bearer.
[2] That is, so little is left of it that it is invisible.
[3] The Sufis.

To reel,—and no shame to them, nor sin !
And from amid the vitals of the wine-jars it slow ascends,[1]
And of it there remains not, in truth, but the name.
And, should it fall, upon a day, into the thought of a man,
In him would Joys remain, and Cares depart.
And, did the Revellers but look upon the seal of its jar,
That seal would make them drunk without the wine.
And, if with it they sprinkle the moist earth of one dead,
To him the spirit would return, and the body revive.
And, if in the shade of its vineyard-wall they cast
One sick, e'en unto death, him would his sickness forsake.
And should they bring a cripple near to its Tavern, he would walk
And the dumb, at the mention of the taste of it, would speak.
And, were the breaths of its perfume diffused in the West,
And in the East were one rheum-dulled, to him would sense of smell return.
And by its cup, if the palm of one a-touching were crimson-stained,

[1] Evaporates.

He would not wander in the night, and in his hand a star.
And to one born blind were it secretly revealed, anon would he
Have clearest sight; and at its gurgling the deaf would hear.
And were a caravan but making for the dust of its land,
And therein one scorpion-stung, the poison would not hurt.
And should the Magician trace the letters of its name
On the forehead of one possessed, him would the tracing heal.
And over the banner of an army were its name written,
Then were those under that banner made drunken by that writing.
It refines the manners of the Revellers so that it guides
Into the path of strong-will him who had no will-strength,
And he is generous whose hand knew not generosity,
And gentle e'en in the midst of wrath who had no gentleness.
And should the tongue-tied of the folk reach the touching of its strainer,[1]

[1] That is, the strainer put over the mouth of a jar before drinking.

The touch would make him gain the oratory of
its Virtues.
They say to me, " Describe ; for thou of its
description art
" Well-informed." " Yea, with me is knowledge
of her attributes.
" She is purity and not water : subtlety and
not air :
" Light and not fire : spirit and not body.
" News of her was before all things that are,
" Of old, and there was no form there nor sign.
" All things came to be through her, and then
for some wise purpose,
" They were through her too veiled from all men
lacking understanding.
" And my spirit is 'wildered by her when the
two are mingled
" Into oneness, and yet body has not inter-
penetrated body.
" So she is wine and not vine, and Adam to
me is a father,
" And vine and not wine, and to me her mother
is mother.[1]
" And the pleasure in the vessels [2] in truth
follows
" Pleasure in the ideas, and the ideas grow
through her.

[1] The sense of this verse is not apparent. Wine is called " the daughter of the vineyard." The " mother " is Eve.
[2] The " vessels " are words.

" And separation has befallen, and all is one,
" For our spirits are wine and our bodies a vine.
" And there is not before her a Before, nor after her an After,
" And as for the Beforeness of the Afters, she is to them a decree.[1]
" The age of furthest range—before that was her age,
" And the date of our father was after her, and hers is orphanhood.[2]
" Her virtues lead those who praise to describe her,
" So that good concerning her is the prose and the verse.
" And he who knows her not rejoices at the mention of her,
" Like the lover of Noam when Noam is mentioned." [3]
And they say: " Thou hast drunk what is sin." " By no means. Only
" I drank that which to leave were sin in me."
Good health to the people of the Abbey! [4]
How they are drunken with it!

[1] Similar terms are often used of God.

[2] She was before Time immemorial. The description reminds us of the description of the Divine Wisdom in the Hebrew Book of Proverbs, chapter viii. She was before Adam, and had no father nor ancestry.

[3] Or, " Like him who longs for prosperity, when prosperity is mentioned."

[4] That is, non-Muslims.

Nor have they drunk of it, though they had the will.
But I have been drunken with it from before my birth.
With me for ever it remains, even when my bones decay.
Receive it pure, but if thou wilt have it mingled,
Then thy turning from the bright lips of the beloved is grievous wrong.
Cleave to it in the tavern, and be united to it there
To the notes of melodies, for such with it are a spoil.[1]
For not with care it dwelleth ever anywhere:
Just so there dwells not with the notes grief.
To be once drunken with it, were it but for the lifetime of an hour,
Thou wouldest see the world[2] a willing slave, thine to command,
For there is no life in the world for him who sober lives,
And who dies not of drunkenness,—prudence has passed him by.
For himself then let him weep whose life has gone astray,
And who has not in wine portion nor share.

[1] Appropriate. [2] Or, Fortune.

## APPENDIX III

## VERSES BY AL-TUGHRÁ'I ILLUSTRATING ORIENTAL PESSIMISM

Al-Tughrá'i was a contemporary of Omar Khayyám and met with a reverse of fortune similar to that which appears to have overtaken the latter, being dismissed from the civil service of one of the Seljuks of Irák. The following poem tells how he stood the blow. There are many points of contact with Omar, but there is none of his gaiety and light-heartedness. Although written in Arabic, it is called "The Persians' Ode rhyming in L," in imitation of a somewhat similar Ode of the Arabs ascribed to a pre-Islámic poet. It has often been printed and edited, and there is a rhymed translation by J. D. Carlyle, the professor of Arabic at Cambridge, published in 1796. The ode was written in the year 1111, and Al-Tughrá'i was killed in Baghdad ten years later.

The Muslim is not generally a pessimist. His faith in God carries him through the most desperate circumstances. Hence suicide is almost unknown in Islámic countries. But in the verses

which follow and in the quatrains of Omar the religious element is absent. For this reason the two deserve to be read together.

The rendering is from the text contained in the *Majáni'l-Adab ;* the text printed with a Latin translation by Edward Pocock in 1661 contains 59 lines, but those omitted here do not offer anything relevant.

Firmness of thinking holds me from crooked speech,
And the adornment of merit graces me in loss of office.
My glory at first and my glory at last are equal,
As the Sun at rising and the Sun about to set are the same.
Wherefore should I remain in Baghdad ? I have no home there,
Nor have I one she-camel there nor stallion.
Far from friends, solitary, empty-handed,
As a sword of which the sides are bare of tracèd scabbard.
No friend is there to whom I may complain of my grief,
Nor companion with whom I may share my joy.
Long has been my absence, until my camel yearns for home,
And her very journeying and the points of the quivering spears do yearn.

My lean camel cries from weariness, and groans for what
Befalls my cavalcade, and my people ever blame me.
I was but seeking width of hand which should aid me
In discharging the claims of high ideals upon me.
But Fortune overthrew my hopes, and made me to be content,
Not with spoil, but with safe return after all my trouble.
Love of Life turns the care of him who has it
From high things, and binds a man to laziness.
Then, if thou incline to this, take thee a burrow
Under ground or a ladder up to heaven, and begone,
And leave the main seas of high deeds to those who venture
To ride them, and content thee with sprinklings thereof.
The humble is pleased with lowliness of life, which lessens his worth,
But Honour is among the heavy tread of camels well broken,
With these push thou into the throats of the deserts firmly,
Their simple halters vying with the double-bridled (horses).
High ideals have taught me, and they are truth-speaking

In what they teach, that Honour is found in adventure.
If that in the honour of home were the attaining of desires,
The Sun had not ceased for a day to be situate in Aries.[1]
I cry "Get on" to Fortune. Would that I cried to one that heard!
But Fortune, far from me, with fools is busy.
Perhaps she, were my worth and their defects plain
To her eye, would sleep to them and wake for me.
I beguile my soul with the hopes for which I watch.
How strait were Life, were it not for the roominess of Hope!
I enjoyed not life when its days were all to come.
How should it please me, now that they have passed so speedily?
My knowledge of my soul makes its value dear:
I preserve it from cheapness of worth, demeaning.
And the wont of the blade is that it be valued for its metal,
But it works not save in the hands of a hero.
I choose not that my time should be lengthened

[1] The Sun being in Aries in spring, the best season of the year.

Till I should see the rule of the weaklings and the base,—
Creatures preceding me whose most furious riding was
Behind my walking pace, walk I never so slowly.
Such is the reward of the man whose friends are gone
Before himself, and he desires a lengthening of time.
Then, if he rise above me who is below me, no wonder!
I take comfort in the placing of the Sun below Saturn.[1]
Submit then to Fortune, nor scheming nor grieving:
In the vicissitudes of Fortune is what dispenses thee from schemes.
Thy worst enemy is the nearest of those whom thou trustest;
So beware of men, and company with them with caution.
The man of the world and its matchless one is he
Who relies not in the world upon a man.
Promise-keeping is scanty and treachery is rife, and broad
Is the width of breach between saying and doing.

[1] Saturn being in the seventh sphere of the Ptolemaic system and the Sun in the fourth.

Thy fair thoughts of the days are idle folly,
So think ill, and be in regard to them upon thy guard.
Thy truth-speaking to men their lying mars,—
And is the crookèd reckoned with the straight ?
And were a thing succeeding through their keeping
To their contracts, it is because "the sword outstrips rebuke." [1]
O Man that drawest of the last dregs of life when all is turbid,
Thou hast spent thy life in thy first days.
For what is thy facing the main sea which thou ridest,
When thee there sufficeth of it one sipping of a drop ? [2]
The Kingdom of Content—it is not to be feared for,
Nor needest thou therein servants and retinue.
Thou hopest an abiding in an house which hath no enduring,
And heardest thou ever of a shadow which did not shift ?
O Man that art so full of information, penetrating into secrets,

[1] An Arab was blamed for killing another in one of the sacred months in which fighting was forbidden. He replied, "The sword has outstripped rebuke," meaning, "The deed is done, the rebuke comes too late." Here it seems to mean that, if men do keep to their contracts, it is for fear of the consequences if they break them.

[2] "Man wants but little here below."

Listen, for in silence is safety from slips.—
"They have fostered thee for a purpose, an
thou but understood it;
"Have a care to thyself, lest thou feed with lost
sheep." [1]

[1] "To thine own self be true."

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